Raillerie a la Mode CONSIDER'D:

Matt: OR THE Isaack

SUPERCILIOUS DETRACTOR.

A

Joco-serious *Discourse*; shewing the open *Impertinence* and *Degenerosity* of Publishing *Private* Pecques and Controversies to the World.

Occasionally Written.

To a Young Gentleman, to shew the *Odium* of this Ingentile *Humour*, and to direct him in the best choice of Men and Books.

Multi cum aliis maledicant, sibi ipsis convitium faciant, Seneca.

LONDON,

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THE PUBLISHER TO THE READER.

Generous Reader,

FOR such I would have thee to be, to Answer the true Design of these few Sheets: First occasionally writ by way of Advice to a Young

To the Reader.

Young Gentleman *abroad, and I humbly conceive not unseasonable to any that make pretence to that* Name *or* Quality.

It teaches true Curtisie, Charity, Civility, *and the Duty of* Good Language *which we owe unto all Men, which are indeed the Supreme Points of Generosity, Policy, Christianity, as well as of Moral Virtues, among such as approve and practice them.*

You have here the Cha-

racter

racter of a Detractor, *accurately drawn forth and Detected through all his Protean Shapes and Disguises, with the true Imbelishments that should adorn a* Bred *and* Worthy *Man, whereby your self are left to judge which of these are most amible, when you behold both their Pictures here set before you.*

These Lines were purposely set to pull up this Croking Mandrake (*Detraction*) *from amongst us, and to root*

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out this old overgrown Vice, which is so much the Bane of true Love, Friendship, *and happy* Society, *the corruption of* Manners *and good* Nature; *odious in the* Mean, *and ignoble in the* Eminent, *and not to be countenanc'd in any Common Wealth.*

So that this Discourse concurring with the present general Vogue of every Sober and Judicius Gentleman: I am not to doubt of its favourable reception among them, and of others also by their Example.

SIR,

I Am e'ne grown *weary* of longer Obſerving your now *irkſome* Commands, to look after *New* Books to ſend you: and therefore pray excuſe me, leſt at length I ſeem both to abuſe your *Patience*, and that weak Judgment you have choſe to rely on: Finding now the *frantick* Age ſo intollerably peſter'd with whimſical *Paſquils*, *Ralleries*, and *Rota's*, that in truth we have nothing elſe that's *Newſ*; nor in-

deed is this *strictly* so, for it is no more than the Old mad Humor of the *Cobler of Glocester new* Vampt.

And lest you may not perhaps have seen enough by the *Books* themselves I have (at your desire) sent you, I shall take a little pains to give you my Sense of the present sort of Writing, to shew you (as seasonable to your Young and Inconversant Years) the Ridiculousness, Incivility, and Inhumanity of it, in a few short and sober *Reflexions* on this Publick Piece of *Folly*, which does but indeed render us the mere Ludibrium and Maygame

game of Strangers, it is a fashion so illy introduced among us.

It is a Vitious sort of *Buffoonry*, that this mistaken Age is ready to cry up for a high acquir'd *Ornament*) and Piece of Refin'd *Education*, while a *sober* Judgment, or *modest* Innocence, is as much mistook, and exploded for meer *Dulness* and *Ignorance*. He that can *abuse* another *handsomely*, is presently applauded for a *shrewd* Wit, a *notable* Man, which indeed imports no better than an abusive K------ as a good *harmless honest* Man is but the better word for a *Fool*.

It is indeed, Sir, much my satisfaction, that your Retir'd inclination hath so happily setled you, (for your seasoning time) so commodiously remote from the Corrupt Converse of a great part of this Infectious Town: And I assure you, that I think it altogether my Duty to be as careful that no Contagious Subjects come intrudingly to your hands; and would also advise you to be as cautious of receiving any, as many were of *London*-Letters the last Great Pestilence here amongst us.

Pray take this Advice as from a Friend that most unfeign-

feignedly Loves and Tenders you; and be ſure ever to Chooſe your *Bookes* as you would your *Acquaintance*, (*i. e.*) let them be *few*, *choiſe*, and *reputable*.

You cannot well complain you *want* good *Company*, when you are not without *good Authors* to converſe with; and that too at the *beſt* Advantage, (as I take it) their *Writings* being for the moſt part much the *beſt* of them, compar'd with their *common* converſe and perſonal ſociety.

When you are *ſoberly* contemplative, your *Companion* is

ſtill at hand to entertain your Humor; when your *thoughts* incline you another way, then have you *others* to divert you; and when you are *weary* of all, at laſt you may take down *Apollo*'s Lute, and *refreſh* your fancy with the moſt *pleaſing*, and not unprofitable, ſtrains of *Poetry*, Engliſh or others.

But truly to Buy or Read theſe *Cudgel-playing* Books, is but to make *Billings-gate* your Diverſion; or to know the *beſt* way how to give *bad* Language: 'tis no better than downright *Railing*, Frenchifi'd into *Raillerie* a la mode.

Beſide

Beſide the ſmart *Itch* of *Writing* and *Replying* in this *New Canting Drolling* Way, made up of a few *fugitive* Expreſſions, I am ſure he that gives himſelf up to this, muſt at once licentiouſly let go the Rains of his *Sobriety*, *Reaſon*, and *Religion*, to play at Have at All; or to Write in a *Refined* ſort of *Frenzy*: For let his *Rodamantadoes* and Bombaſt be but unreachably Remote, or Far-fought, (as we commonly ſay) and it will want nothing to make it off: provided the Bookſeller be but Wiſe.

To be Witty at this Rate,

is certainly very Poor, Pitiful, as well as Spightful, for any one to signalize himself by, because every one that will (sans regard) assume this abominable *abusive* Liberty, may as easily attain the accomplishment (if any will have it one) for as much as Mens Wits are naturally readier at this than any other Theme: Yet though the Ape be never so curiously trick'd up, he is still but the *same*: so let such Works be set out in never so quaint Language, yet what are they better then *unsavory* Breaths *perfum'd*? a more precious kind of *stink* in the Nostrils of either the Judicious or Good,

and

and ſmell ſtill too much of the *Dunghil* Declamations of the Schools; ſtudied Oppoſitions, though by ſome they may be ſaid *ſmart* or *witty*, yet the order of their *Deſign*, or Matters wherewith they meddle, are very little Juſt or Conformable to the Precepts of good *Morality*, *Humanity*, or *Chriſtianity*, in any degree; and ſo baſe and degenerate a *Genius*, ought utterly to be abandon'd by the *ſober* and *civil* ſort of Mankind, and of all that profeſs and love *Virtue*, as diſſentaneous to the right Rules of true *Generoſity*; and as much beneath that Grandeur of a *Chriſtians* high *Profeſſion*, which teaches

teaches Men not to *revile* and *ſlander* one another; and forewarns them from being *Buſie-bodies* in other Mens matters.

Some Men, in the heat of Humor, while the letcherous Itch laſts, care not who they Traduce or Reflect upon, ſo they can but do it handſomely in huggermugger. *Kings* and *Privy Councellors* cannot ſcape them. But could you peep through the Key-hole while he is in cloſe Adultery (in his Study) with his Wanton Muſe, and let but a Mouſe, or the leaſt Noiſe ſtir, how he obrupty ſtarts, and rumples up the Naughty Sheets in more haſte

haſte and confuſion than the Gallant ſhifts the Scene of his private Debaucheries upon a dangerous ſurprize! and when all is whiſt, is preſently at it again.

When 'tis once delivered, 'tis preſently pawn'd upon the Publick, like a Brat upon the Pariſh, the Incognito Parent ſtanding by to obſerve how 'tis received; who raiſes, with the reſt, againſt that, which ſhame and danger dares not let him own for fear of Penance, or a Whipping-poſt.

But 'twere with ſuch highly ridiculous, to ask in St. *Paul's* I an-

Language, *What Profit have ye of those Things whereof ye are now Ashamed?*

And in vain may we expect *common* Civility from those that are not *afraid* or ashamed (at these dayes) irreverently to *scoff* at, and impiously to *detract* those most Princely Presidents of *Piety* in holy Writ, *David* and *Solomon*. The lewd and *Venereous* Person, (who makes his *Body* a *Burnt-offering* to his *inflamed Lust*) seeks to acquit and justifie himself with this Plea, and to seem *wittily* wicked, asks you, *What did* David *ail when he complained of his Bones, and his Sore*

ran

ran down in the Night? Give him grave and sober Advice, or but go about to stop him in his Career of *Folly*, and he presently pleads *Solomon*; and will purchase convincement at no *cheaper* a rate, than the dangerous high Price of *Experience*. He builds Sconces, and runs on Tavern-scores, and then Pleades that *Paul* Pawn'd his Cloak, *&c.*

At this *prophane* and paltry rate he seeks to purchase the repute of *witty*: he out-Huffs Hell, out-Hectors Beelzebub, and can dispence with the Name of *Atheist*, if he be not proud on't, and openly own and glory in it. This

This is one that with little *Fear*, and leſs *Wit*, will ſtill be at his *Ludere cum Sacris*; that dare be impudent with Heaven, and ſawcy with its moſt awful Majeſty, to the Hearers aſtoniſhment, and his own ſhameful confuſion; that, like an over-daring *Vaulter*, will forſooth be ſhewing *tricks* of Activity upon the very Brink and Precipice of *Hell*; and play at Hide and Seek with the *Devil* himſelf, till at laſt he catches him in his Clutches, as the Cat does her wanton Prey, and ſo ſpoiles his Sport on a ſuddain.

But let's leave him to the *Juſtice*

Juſtice of that Power his *Folly* thus inconſiderately provoked: and Sir let me Adviſe you to ſhun the Society of ſuch, leſt you ſhare in their Puniſhment, and as you would eſcape the infamous Cenſure you will thereby fall under, alwayes taking it for ſure, That you ſhall go under the ſame Account and Character of the Company you conſort with, ſince the World hath ever look'd upon this Rule as infallible.

And now Sir, paſſing this, and to come nearer home to my purpoſe, I ſhall briefly obſerve to you, how profuſe and heedleſs

heedless Men now a dayes are of their *own* and *others* Fame or Reputation, (too valuable to be thrown or made away in sport) while they thus publickly traduce, detract and asperse one another, as they do both in *word* and *writing*; which latter I shall chiefly take notice of, and look upon as a Libel of the Devils Dictature, such Writers being set on by pure Idleness, the *Primum mobile* of all Mischief.

What is there in it else but a meer Itch of Spleen, edg'd on by the hope of building up a new Credit upon another Mans Weakness.

A *Leap-Frog* Fancy of Writing *Alternis Vicibus*, by fits and girds, as the Humor hits, or holds out to the hap-hazard of the adventurous Bookseller, but the adornment of Posts and Pissing-places, worthy of no further regard or notice, then the Printed Bills for Prizes at the Bear-Garden, being at best but a Trial of Skill another way, where both sides beat up and flourish as Victors; but set no sharper an edge either on their Wits or Weapons, than what will well serve to cut your Purse-strings, the whole aim of these cheating Challengers: which if the

overcurious Widgins of the World will not believe, but will be ſtill couzen'd *thus* with this *Hocus Pocus* Humor, let them, I ſay; but (my good Friend) I hope you will take my word, and be wiſer.

Nor do I indeed much doubt or queſtion your diſcretion, I underſtand you, and you your ſelf better: And the beſt on't is, ſuch *Books*, beſides making the Authors *ridiculous*, do ſeldom *prejudice* the *Readers* more than with loſs of *time*; nor ſo altogether, for ſure (if he have any ſenſe) he ſhall grow *wiſer* by the *folly* repreſented

ſented him, as *Drunkards* ſometimes *loathe* themſelves by beholding it *ſoberly* in others.

Can we term it leſs than a *ſhameleſs incivility* in ſuch as would go about to oblige the World (whether it will or no) to take notice of their Private Picques and Controverſies, which with a great deal of pudder they publickly expoſe to common Cenſure; nor can it be thought leſs in thoſe that are the buſie Pryers into theſe publick Impertinencies, the very *Reading* of which is a kind of unhappineſs, but a

Reviſal both Guilt and Approbation.

Certainly as long as this odd mood laſts of taking up one anothers Works in this Nature, we muſt never look to ſee *Ingenuity* flouriſh, for our growing Wits will be afraid to put forth, while the early Bloſſomes of their beſt Endeavors are ſtill in danger to be publickly blaſted by the *vituperous* Breath of every *malepert* Momus, who like the *Baſilisk*, ſtrikes dead all he ſees at firſt ſight, and whoſe whole ſtreſs of Wit ſtrives only to ſtiffle others;

and

and such are well set forth by the Ingenious (and therefore envy'd) Pen of the fam'd *Dryden* in this single Couplet of his:

Those that Advantage *of each*
slip *do take,*
Find but those Faults, *which*
they want Wit *to make.*

Away then with this ill-natur'd, disingenious, fault-finding Humor, and be favorable to the failings of others, as ever you expect Men may in kindness connive at your failings or imperfections; when they happen *Humanum est er-*

rare, 'tis liable to all in some things, but especially to such as either write much, or variously often; and ought not with an over-rigid Censure to be too severely insisted on; for this doth but breed vain jangling; for as one *ill word* begets *another*, so (we see) doth one *abusive* Book another, till they even *puzzle*, as well as *weary* the whole World with reading the bare Titles of them.

One *Book* beares the Bell away one while, and then presently comes out *Reflections*, *Observations*, *Answers*, *Replications*,

cations, and *Exceptions* upon it, till the Preſs is ſo bepeſtred with them, that at laſt the Sheets grow more numerous than the long Books and Papers of a *Chancery Cauſe*, which are as pertinent and worthy of *publiſhment* as the firſt, (for ought I know) and in time may both ſerve to one and the ſame *uſe* (after the *World* and the *Court* have diſmiſs'd the Controverſie and Brangle) in a Grocers or a Chandlers Shop.

If any ſuch Book have intruded into your Study, let them be turned out for *Wranglers*, as unfit to keep

Company with the quiet and civiler ſort.

Or take my advice, and change 'em away quickly while the humor holds up, for others more pleaſant and profitable, though (you loſe well by 'em) before the Gameſters have croſs'd the Cudgels,, and the Ring-round world leaves minding them: As ſome tough and ſturdy *Trojans*, after much belabouring one another, have long ſince done. --- *Laus Deo.*

Our *Laureat* himſelf cannot eſcape Calumny, (though I muſt

must confess he too much dar'd it) that Reward of Wit (Sacred to Poets) he finds could not defend him from the blast of a Criticks Breath. In spight of *Apollo*'s self they will attaque him; some thinking to be reputed Wits for only impudently daring to meddle with it.

Thus was he (for sooth) taken to Task, Post-poned, and there Lash'd on both sides by the two, too unkind Universities, *Oxford* first taking him up, while his Mother *Cambridge* Chastised him severely. In the first place, for forgetting his old Grammer Rules. So rigidly strict were

they

they to keep him to the ſcrupulous Precepts of their (long ſince *exploded*) Pedantry, *befettering* his *fugitive* fancy in the Poetick Tranſport, that he ſhould not hereafter Sore beyond the nearKen of their ſlow and ſhort ſighted Genius; and next for abuſing his Grandſire *Shakeſpeare*, and Father *Ben*, and being very ſawcy with others of his Elders. But he is huſh and done, ſay they, while they ſeem to hold a littleRod, made up of a few Stalks of diſjunctive ſenſe, they had ſpightfully ſpoil'd the beautifull Bed of his beſtFlowers off, & pick'd out to laſh him with. And fain would they have confin'd his

Licentious

Licentious Muſe (as they brand her) to her *Nunnery*: But they ſince may ſee how briskly ſhe turns up her Vail, and with a modeſt ſcorn acquaints them in the words of her *Heroe*. 'That he hath neither con-'cernment enough upon him 'to write any thing in his 'own Defence; neither will 'he gratifie the Ambition of 'two wrethed Scriblers, who 'deſire nothing more than to 'be anſwered: Finding he wanted not Friends, even a-mong Strangers, who defend-ed him more ſtrongly, than his contemptible Pedant could Attaque him.

By this becoming ſcorn you ſee how he prevents them from further undertaking againſt him, when (like a Moroſe or Frumpiſh odd Fellow, bob'd in the Street with a by-word) had he turned again he would have had half the Town hooting at him. Thus he ſhews more Wit in his ſlight and ſilence, then poſſibly he ever would by his Pen when it performs beſt; though I truly believe that he is able to make thoſe piece-meal Features, which his over curious Criticks examine ſo illy apart, to appear in their right place and poſition, no leſs then what himſelf ſays, as ſo many real

Beauties

Beauties in the Eye of such as are able to judge and admire the true perfections of a Muse.

Sir, I speak this because I know you have always had a just value for Mr. *Dryden*'s Poems, as well as my self, and I have believed you very discerning this way; and so he cannot easily be brought low in your esteem; you too well perceiving the Design of his Enemies without more words.

But to inform you further, having, Sir, lately the leisure of an Afternoon, I took occasion to go among the Book-

sellers

ſellers to enquire what elſe there was *newly* extent: I chopt upon an an Adventurous Author, who had took on him to write *Remarques on the Humour and Converſation of the Town*; which had not been long abroad, but it was ſeized upon by the ſharp Claw of a Critick, and by him Stigmatized with the Name of *Remarques* upon *Remarques*. I was unwilling, and thought it vain to read one without the other, and ſo thought beſt to buy neither.

But the Bookſeller would ſtill impoſe further on me, and preſents me with another new piece, called the *Rehearſal Tranſpros'd*,

Transpros'd, &c. a Title I understood not I confess: But seeing it a thing that had twice troubled the Press, and having the Booksellers word that it was worth reading, I took it. But having spent my time and Money upon it, all I could say was, I found my self very *Wittily* beguil'd of *both*: But (believe me) I think I might as well have read *Tom* of *Lincoln*, or *Bevis* of *Southampton*, for ought I edified by it, and would pay thanks to boot to any little Boy to change with me.

Yet truly I must confess, *Wit* there was in it, but like a

Jewel

Jewel in the *Dunghill* of Detraction, not worth the Generous and Ingenious Mans raking for. But the *Crab-tree* Stock of some Mens Humours will bear no better Fruit; yet methinks they shou'd not then carry their *sower* Sentences to the Press, they seem so little *serviceable* or *seasonable*, and cannot be counted *Solomons* Apples. But some Mens petulant Humours incline them still to transpose the Proverb, which says, *'Tis better to be at the latter end of a Feast, than the beginning of a Fray.*

Now you must understand *Transprosal* is the little *a la Mode* Word that at present obtains

and

and has of late made such a deal of Gingle Gangle abroad, by the help of *Transprosing*. The *Rehearsal Transpros'd* (Answer) the *Transproser Rehearsed*, &c. But how extreamly pleasant is it to observe how wittily the Transproser turns Transposer, and finds himself sport at Tick Tack for half a Dozen Pages together, and all with two poor Letters [*J.* and *O.*] I warrant the Man has a most extraordinary fancy at Composing Anagrams and Acrosticks, and is excellent at Wire-drawing Wit, that can so prittily play with two Letters so long, and they happened to be lucky ones for his turn.

Every one will have a bob at *Bayes*, though alas he is not likely he get a wreath of it, for the Wit he lays out upon it. And now the yelp is up, 'ſtoo him *Bayes* Cries one; Hollo *Bayes* Cries a ſecond, *Whoop Bayes* a third, enough to worry one out of his *Wits*. I cannot tell what better to compare it to, than like the clapping and ſcolding of a ragged-canting Crew of *Billingſgate* Rhetoricians, or thoſe of *Roſemary Lane*, where if any will once but give the *Cue* of one Word provocative, he ſhall preſently hear a full Peal of moſt exquiſite Harmony indeed. You ſhall

ſhall not meet with a Term ſo mild as *Gregory Father Gray Beard*; they could have furniſhed him with a Title ten times more Taking, (*ex Tempore*) and poſſibly more intelligible too. But hang't, let it paſs, it comes all to one purpoſe.

Having thus given you ſome hints of this hateful Humour, I would fain draw to a cloſe with my Diſcourſe, there remains only a few *Cautionary Remarques* to direct you in your choiſe of Men. And what your own Judgment will repreſent to you, will render the reſt odious enough to your generous mind, without any further reflections.

If we consider the mischief as well as degenerosity of this *Destructive* Humour among Men, either in *Words* or *Writing*, we would certainly shun it with greatest detestation.

As then you have any respect for your own Peace and Quiet, endeavour still to keep your self unconcerned from impertinent listening after, or prying into private or publick Reports of this sort; for that you must either betray, or inevitably bring in question your Friendship if you conceal it; or if perhaps on the other side you impart it, you

but

but kindle Coals of contention, and beget private grudges and heart-burnings, and make your ſelf in a manner bound either to accuſe or vindicate, and had therefore much better to be deaf and dumb in ſuch concerns in both Offices.

Be ſure therefore to ſhew no kind of Countenance to ſuch as can find no other means to ſcrew themſelves in to your opinion and favour, than by this treacherous way of traducing others to you.

Nor would I have you over apt to liſten to, or truſt him that fain would be tickling you with adulatory praiſe of your parts and qualities; eſpecially if the Party be a ſtranger to you, and one that you never any ways had obliged before; for 'tis common with ſome ſort of men to put on a fawning familiarity upon the firſt Acquaintance they have with any one, to make laviſh offers of Friendſhip and ſervice to you. Sir, (I ſay) take good heed of ſuch a one, leaſt there be (as 'tis odds if there be not) ſome Sting of Deſign at the end of their Tail.

Beſides

Besides, what can sound more harsh or untunable in the Ear of the generous, wise or modest, than to hear an Encomiastick Harangue or Elogy of Praise personally addrest to his Face. Musick fit for none but Fools to caper at: alas! they must be but silly *Trouts*, that will be so tickled to death. The saying of *Tully* ought to be every true Gentleman's: *Nolo esse laudator, ne videar Adulator.* Now (for ought you know) this great Praise may be but *Ironice prodere Famam*: the Man that speaks so & so, may possibly mean nothing less, but the quite contrary; but be sure he that hath any

Sense, will not be imposed on at this rate; but will soon find it out, and know how to retort it in the like Language.

But on the other side, where this kind of Flattery on both sides takes, as said, sadly, really, and indeed, then cannot there be more pleasant Diversion, than to see two Asses bray out Applauses to one another. This is *Mulus mulum scabit*, or *Kee me, and I'le kee thee*, as the old Proverb speaks. But certain it is, none can be flattered of another, till he first flatter himself.

One may observe a sort of Na-

Natural Rhetorick, even among the Common Profeſſors of the Art of Railling; they have their Figures, Graces, and Ornaments peculiar to their kind of Speech, though they do not diſtinguiſh or uſe them Grammatically, by the Names of *Sarcaſmus*, *Aſteiſmus*, *Micteriſmus*, *Antiphraſis*, *Charientiſmus*, or *Ironia*, yet have they their Dry *Bobs*, their Broad *Flouts*, Bitter *Taunts*, their Fleering *Frumps*, and Privy *Nips*. Beſides the uſe of their admirable Art of Canting, they have a cunning way of Jeering, accuſing others by juſtifying themſelves, and ſaying, I never did--- or by asking the

the Queſtion general, Who did ſo and ſo? Why who did you Whore cries 'tother? did I? and ſo the Game begins; but by this evaſive way of Abuſe they will be ſure to keep wide off the Law's Tenterhooks.

Thus you ſee there is none can come out Maſter of this Art that hath not been brought up at *Billingſgate*, for only there are found the beſt Proficients of this kind, which while ſome of our Authors are but the baſhful Imitators; alas, ſee how far they fall ſhort of the true force and efficacy that is to be found in the

the perfection of this Faculty.

But I have deviated a while from my first discourse, giving you the fore-going Reflections, I now come again to consider the end of Writing, and what is most commendable. The principal end of Reading is I am sure to enrich the Mind; and doubtless that is the best Work where the Graces and the Mutes meet. But where every Man thinks what he lists, speaks what he thinks, writes what he speaks, and prints what he writes, from such kind of scribling, carried on by a frantick Figgary, I do not well apprehend what Advantage

vantage can in the leaſt accrue one way or other to the Readers, either to the enriching their Diſcourſe, or advancing their Knowledg.

Nor is it eaſie to conceive the drift or deſign of this odd fantaſtick way of writing without the help of a skilful *Interpreter*, they having more need of Notes and a Comment, than the Hiſtory of Don *Quixot*, without which you ſhall be no more able to apprehend our Author, than capable to carry off the Intregue of one of our Now-adayes Comedies, ſo hard it is to force the Poetick Fire out of their

their flinty Inventions. The Treasury of Wit being of late so close lock'd up in the Wild Meanders of our present Muses, that he that has not the Court-key of the newest forge, shall hardly be the better for't.

I cannot tell how this way of Writing comes to be now the Mode that so much obtains, I mean of Detracting and Traducing Persons; for I do not remember the Ingenious Author of the Book called, *Reflections upon the Eloquence of the Bar and Pulpit*, so much as once mentions, much less commends this manner of writing or speaking, as either

either modish, modest, or decent; but gives this Gentle Lash to the Users of it, That nothing of that kind is entertained with *effect*, when too *personally* addrest: and that though with *civility* we may glance at, yet may we not without *rudeness* and ill manners, too openly stare upon the faults or imperfections of any Person.

Detraction is an old Vice, although it be but newly come into request among us again: It was the sin of *Haman* against *Mordecai*, of *Saul* against *David*, of *Jezabel* against *Naboth*; and there are whole Psalms of

of Execration for this Sin.

I find an old Poet of ours (*Gower*) Declaiming againſt this Vice in this manner.

Invidiæ pars eſt Detractio
peſſima, peſtem
Quæ magis infamem flatibus
oris agit.
Lingua venenato ſermone re-
percuit aures,
Sic ut in alterius ſcandala fa-
ma volat.
Morſibus a tergo quos inficit
ipſa fideles
Vulneris ignoti ſepe ſalute ca-
rent.
Sed generoſus Amor linguam
conſervat, ut ejus

Verbum

Verbum quod loquitur nulla sinistra gerat.

This honest old Author sets out this Vice in this sort, by way of Admonition.

Euer kepe thou thy tonge stylle,
Thou myzt the more have of thy wille,
If that thy self art envyous,
Thou shalt not be gracious,
As thou parauentur sholdest be elles,
Ther wol no man drink of the welles,
Whiche as he wote is poyson ynne;
And ofte such as men begynne
Towards other, suche as they fynde,
That set hem ofte fer behynde,
When that they wenen be byfore
My good sone, and thou therefore
Beware and leue thy wycked speche,
Whereof hath fallen ofte wretche
To many a man byfore this time;
For who so wol his hands lyme,
They must be the more unclene,
For many a mote shall be sene,
That wol not elles cleue there,
And that shold euery wise man fere,

For

For who so wol another blame,
He seketh ofte his owne shame,
Which elles might be right stille, &c.

Now should I go about to Paint a *Detractor* forth in his proper Colours, or to Draw every Feature of Deformity in his Face, I fear, in the first place, I should find my Ink not Black enough to Paint so Foul a *Monster*; nor could a Man have Courage enough to Draw the Devil, without the Security of some Good Guardian by his side.

But I'le venture on Him; for, as they say, if we can but draw Bloud of *Witches*, their Envious Intents cease: so if

the Nib of my Pen be but ſharp-pointed enough to prick to the quick, I need not fear the worſt he then can do to me; neither need others, after once they are forewarn'd.

THE

THE

CHARACTER

OF A

Detractor.

A *Detractor* is a kind of *Camelion*, that lives upon the worſt ſort of Air; at firſt bred up and ſuckled with ſour Suſtenance from the lank and flaggy Dugs of his lean and meager Mother *Envy*, he afterwards feeds on Fame; his words are worſe than *Poyſon* of *Aſps*, and are a kind of *Witchcraft*, ſo that the *Sufferer* may juſtly be ſaid to be *under an*

Evil Tongue. Like one of the *wayward* Sisters, he *spightfully* picks the foul and poysonous *Weeds* out of the faireſt *Gardens* of Mens *fruitful* Labors, wherewith to work his wicked *Sorceries*; with *venomous* Breath endeavouring to *blaſt* the beſt and fragrant Flowers of Mens *Writings*, that they may *wither* in the *minds* and *memories* of the World.

He is a ſort of *turbulent* ſpirited *Furiozo*, continually *foaming* out his *frothy* Paſſion on all ſides, like a *malicious* old Woman, ever *muttering*, extreamly *incenſed*; he can find none to vouchſafe to vex him, till

till out of pure *ſpight* he is fain, at length, to be himſelf both *Satyr*, *Anſwer*, and *Reply*. 'Twould *fright* you, or *him* either, to behold his own *angry* Face during the *pang* of Compoſure.

He Writes on as Fiſh-women Rail, without Ceſſation, or Premeditation; without Patience to Hear, or Time to Deliberate: and Anſwers, hit or miſs, without Peruſal, letting all the while his Paſſion *boyl* over, without ever skiming of the filthy Foam that alwayes ariſes from the intemperate Heat of in-kindled Fury.

Eraſmus ſeems to have very well underſtood the Nature of this Malady amongſt Men, and mentions it as if himſelf had once had ſome ſymptomes of it, when he ſayes, *Multi mei ſimiles hoc morbo laborant, ut cum ſcribere neſciant, tamen a-ſcribendo temperare non poſſunt.* Many (ſaith he) are very ſick of my Diſeaſe, and though they can do nothing worthy of the Publick, yet they muſt be publiſhing their (*belliſh*) Humors, fouler than the Ink they write with; and this makes the World abound ſo with Books. The Teemings of every Term, which deſerves a much ſeverer Tax upon every Sheet

Sheet then there is impoſed upon the Law, that ſo it might at once breed leſs Trouble, and more Profit to the Preſs it Plagues.

A Detractor

Is one who knowes how to *ſhoot* dead your *Repute*, and yet you never hear the *Report*; he hath ſeveral ſorts of Poyſons, and but one way to apply 'em, that's commonly at the Ear: He ſometimes *whiſpers* like one that diſcourſes through the *Speaking*-Trumpet, you ſhall hear the *ſound*, but not know *who* utters it, nor whence it proceeds. He is Traytor to Truth, a Lying Oracle, or the Old Devil of

Delphos, to Abuſe the Credulous, Delude the Ignorant, Confirm the Suſpicious, and Inflame the Jealous.

He is a kind of *Monſter* among *Men*, and hath a *double* Face, a *double* Heart, and a *cloven* Tongue; a Viper that will venture to Bite, though he break his venomous Teeth out in the attempt. A *Proteus* in Converſation upon every turn; a *ſubtle* Angler of *Secrets*, he pretends *private* impartments of *others* to hook out *yours*; he firſt finds out (if he can) your inward reſentments of *others*, and then *tickles* you either with *falaci-*

ous

ous Encomiums, or *detractive* Untruths of them, according as he finds out, or can insinuate into your *humor.* I like well the Caution in the Satyr.

Fingere qui non visa potest, commissa tacere
Qui nequit, hic niger est, hunc tu, (Romane) *coveto.*

Who feigns what was not, and discloaks a Soul,
Beware him (Noble *Roman*) he is foul.

A

Worthy Man DESCRIBED.

A Right *Bred*, or *Worthy Man*, will *ſcorn* to be ſo *baſe* as to *Flatter*, and *hates* to be ſo *Curriſh* as to *Bite* ~~any~~ any one; ſo that even his *Reproofs* ſeem *kind* and *generous*, and his *Wounds* do not want their *Balſome*. You may read his Temper in his Face; he fleers not at a Reproachful Jeer, but ſhews his diſlike in his looks; he ſtands aloofe when Men Whiſper, and is no greedy Liſtner after Privacies;

cies; his Tongue never betrayes his Heart, and Report can find no Eccho in him. When you Lodge in him a Secret, your neceſſary Caution locks it ſafe up, and your ſelf keeps the Key. It is his Grief to know a Vice of his Friends, and his Charity he ſhews in concealing it; he never over-Praiſes nor Undervalues any man, for his Prudence inſtructs, that the one ſtirs up Envy, and the other procures contempt. He that can be brought ſo low as Fear or Flattery, muſt not preſume once to own the Forfeited name of Gentleman or Chriſtian.

First,

First he cannot lay claim to the Moral Virtues of Justice, Truth, or Civility, so that he is neither fit to be a Friend or an Umpire in any Affair. Fear and a little meanacing makes him Faulty to Both; nor is he to be Trusted with another Mans Reputation, who has not Courage to defend his own, if questioned. A good Poet says,

Defend the Truth, for that
who will not die
A Coward is, and gives him-
self the lye,

He that hath a Cowardly fear within him can never be

a

a true Christian, but like the After-penetent Apostle, he will be apt in time of Trial to give his own Heart the Lye, and Deny the Lord that *bought* him. He cannot hold the Truth till it wax *hot* in his Hand, or ever endure a Martyrdom for it: But like the wretched *Italian*, panting under the hasty Threats of a surprizing Enemy, (in hopes to save his Life) Belch'd out (as bidden) Horrid *Blasphemies*, to gratifie the Will of his insulting Enemy; till in the midst of them he Stabs the Naked Wretch, and then Brag'd how he had *doubled* his Revenge, Destroying *Soul* and

Body

Body at *one* Blow. But this only by way of illuſtration to clear the laſt Aſſertions of the Degenerate *Effects* of ſuch *ſure* Symptomes of Cowardice and Unchriſtianity.

I have not yet done with our *Detractor*, I muſt take him a little further to Task before I give him over; and ask of him, What *Amends* he can make to the Party, whoſe Fame and Repute he hath Publickly Traduc'd and Vilified.

For doubtleſs if we reſpect Human Society, there cannot be a more *pernicious* Ill attending it; 'tis a giving up a Mans Name

Name to *perpetual* Infamy and Reproach; an *irreparable* Wrong, towards which the *beſt* Amends falls *ſhort* of Satisfaction. A *Blot* never to be *raz'd* out, but by *writing* the whole *fair* over again in way of *Recantation* (Publick *Confeſſion* being ever due to Publick *Injuries*) and when that's done too, to Retract does not make *full* Compenſation, ſince he that does it cannot be *ſure* that he who ſaw his *firſt*, ſhall read his *laſt* alſo.

So that he who offends in this kind, does it not only to his Lifes, but the Worlds end in a Book, which cannot Repent; and therefore Reputation

tion once loſt is paſt Retrieve. An ingenious Poet Cautions well to this purpoſe:

Thy Credit wary keep, 'tis quickly gone;
Being got by many Actions, loſt by one.

I have read a *Fable*, how that *Repntation*, *Love*, and *Death*, made a Covenant to travel o're the *World*, but each was to take a ſeveral Way. When they were ready to depart, mutual Inquiry was made how they might *find* one another again. *Death* ſaid, they ſhould be ſure to hear of him in *Battels*, *Hoſpitals*, and in all Parts

Parts where either *Famine* or *Diseases* are *rife*. *Love* bade them hearken after him among the *Children* of Cottagers, whose Parents had left them *nothing*, at *Marriages*, at *Feasts*, and amongst the *professed* Servants of *Virtue*, the only Bond to tye him fast. They long expected a Direction from *Reputation*, who stood mute; being urg'd to assign them Places where they might find him, he sullenly answered, his Nature was such, that if he *departed* from any Man, he never came to him more. The *Moral* is excellent to our Subject.

To Display a Mans *Malice*

in *Writing*, is no leſs than *deliberate* Wickedneſs, a kinde of *Civil* Murther *prepenc'd*; *chew'd* Bullets that wrankle where they enter; the *Plague* in Paper, which he that would *ſhun*, let him take heed how he comes between the Infectious Sheets.

The Publick Breath of *Calumny*, like *contagious* Air, is of late become too *Epidemical*, though the *Infection* will not ſoon *taint* the *ſound* Conſtitution of a *ſolid* Judgment. The *humming* Noiſe of *Fame*, and the *harſh* grating of *Detraction*, are now the *ungrateful* ſounds that ſo much Diſturb this mutinous Town. The

The *Obſcure* envy the *Eminent*; as Boys cry, Whip Coach-man, when they cannot Ride as well as others. Ingenuity ſure never before knew ſo many Spightful Spider-Pates, which weave Book-leaves of Antick Cobweb-wit, to Catch the Roving-headed Butter-flies of this Age in.

Excuſe me Sir, if I have enlarged my Letter too much on this Subject; and do not think I have done it meerly to pleaſe my own *itch* of *Writing*; for I could never *flatter* my ſelf into any Opinion of my *own* Parts, (if I have any:) And be aſſured, that above all things I

abhor, and moſt ſplēefully laugh at the Publick-ſpirited *Fop*, that is Ambitious of the Name of a *Reformer*; for I have ſeen ſo much the *ſerious* Folly of that too, that I think it much more *faſhionable* to be of the *Laughing* than *Weeping* ſide of the *World*; which alas, the more you ſtrive to *amend*, ſtill the *worſe* you make it.

Thus we ſee there is no *Curb* can keep Men within the *Modeſt Bounds* of *Civility*, albeit *Thoſe* (whoſe care it is) be never ſo Cautious to prevent the Inconveniency of putting forth *particular* Reflections to open Cenſure, under the

the lash of every *Licentious* Pen and Tongue.

But the Press cannot escape without its *Errata's*, and By-blows, (as we count such Books as we have Treated of to be) the obscure Parents sometimes, like *counterfeit* Gypsies, *colouring* their *Brats* over with a *Foreign* Imprimatur, with a *Cant* to the *Typis*, as a Guide to the *Gibberish* it is fraught withal.

And now Sir, if you please, you may communicate this to such of your Ingenious Acquaintance as are Book-buyers, that they (as well as you)

may be made more ſenſible of the preſent Spawn of our Fantaſtick Fry of Town-Wits, and reſt ſatisfied without buying auy more till this Freake be worn out of Faſhion, as I heartily wiſh it were. And ſo, without more ado, (ſave only to wiſh a Return of theſe Men well to their Wits again) I bid you for this time Farewell.

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